

New Hampshire Land & Water Project “Long List”

Land conservation, land management, and land use/development-related programs with potential opportunities for better alignment with Water Resources Protection, especially Drinking Water Source Protection

1/30/08 draft

STATE AGENCIES

DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau

- Groundwater Reclassification Program (All reclassifications to date have been initiated by local entities, but DES may take initiative to reclassify areas.) Wellhead Protection Areas reclassified GAA benefit from a prohibition against six high-risk land uses.
- Local Source Water Protection Grant Program – approximately \$200,000 per year in small (\leq \$20K) grants for PWS source security and protection.
- Watershed rules for water supply sources (Env-Ws 386) – Restrictions on activities on the water (e.g. swimming, boating) and protection of riparian buffers, specific to each of 30 water supply sources.
- Water Supply Land Conservation Grant Program – An average of \$1 million per year (amount varies) in grants to permanently conserve water supply lands. To date, the program has invested \$6.5 million to protect 4,800 acres.

DES Watershed Management Bureau

- Surface Water Quality Standards Program
 - *Anti-degradation of New Hampshire Water (draft)*, 2007 (a work in progress) – could address how programs such as Alteration of Terrain would interact with water quality standards to prevent degradation of water quality.
- Surface Water Quality Assessment Program (“305(b) assessment and reporting”) – Designation as “high quality waters” could have significant implications for DES’s review of proposed land use permits (e.g. Alteration of Terrain, wetlands).
- Coastal Program – distributes grants, conducts research and planning related to a wide range of activities affecting water quality in the coastal watersheds. Participates in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration program to permanently protect important lands in NH’s seacoast.
- Lakes Management and Protection Program
 - Guidelines for Coordinated Lake Management and Shoreland Protection Plans document – being developed under RSA 483-A:7
- Nonpoint Source Management Program (“319 grants program”) – distributes grants for watershed planning and restoration

- Regional Environmental Planning Program – provides funding to Regional Planning Commissions for environmental planning projects
- Rivers Management and Protection Program (15 rivers currently included)
 - Instream Flow Protection Pilot Program – currently preparing management plans for the Lamprey and Souhegan Rivers with respect to protecting instream flows.
 - Local River Management Advisory Committees (LACs) – individuals nominated by their communities and appointed by NHDES to advise DES and their communities on activities that may affect the water quality or flow of the protected river.
 - Local river corridor management plans under RSA 483:10 –LACs have a duty to develop river corridor and/or watershed management plans. RSA 483 stipulates that these plans may be adopted as part of a community’s Master Plan.
 - Long-range management plans for state-owned land within designated river watersheds under RSA 483:10-a (being developed).

DES Land Management Programs

- Alteration of Terrain Program – Requires erosion and sedimentation controls and long-term stormwater management where large land areas are disturbed. (Rules currently being readopted with significant amendments; review of applications will require close coordination with Drinking Water Source Protection Program.)
- Shoreland Protection Program – Restricts clearing and development near many of the state’s lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams. (Developing rules to implement recent amendments to statute.)
- Subsurface Program – Regulates design and installation of septic systems and the subdivision of land to ensure adequate on-site sewage disposal.
- Wetlands Program – Regulates dredging and filling of wetlands and surface waters.

Office of Energy and Planning

- *Report on Growth Management* – prepared every four years by OEP staff for the Council on Resources and Development. CORD is pursuing implementation of high-priority recommendations which may include training for personnel in other state agencies.
- *State Development Plan* – being finalized by OEP, focuses on planning for development that preserves NH’s character and natural assets.
- Housing and Conservation Planning Program - funds municipal efforts to plan simultaneously for housing needs and conservation goals in an integrated manner.

- Conservation Land Stewardship Program – monitors and protects the conservation values of all conservation easement lands in which the State of New Hampshire has invested.
- Municipal and Regional Planning Assistance Program – provides information and training regarding smart growth as part of its program of support to municipal and regional planners, through its Smart Growth website, its newsletter, and its annual conference.

N.H. Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food

- Division of Regulatory Services
 - Agricultural Nutrient Management Grants Program – small (\$2,500) grants for the implementation of nutrient best management practices on farms.
 - Best Management Practices – program ensures compliance with agricultural nutrient BMPs through publishing guidance and investigating complaints
- Division of Pesticide Control
 - Groundwater Program - monitoring program to assess the impact of pesticides and management programs on water quality, reviewing special permit applications and imposing conditions to minimize risk of pesticide contamination.

N.H. Fish and Game Department (owns or has hunting rights to approximately 30,000 acres)

- Wildlife Division - *Wildlife Action Plan*, 2006 – Forty of the 72 implementation strategies, including land conservation, have been accomplished or are in progress.
- Landowner Incentive Program – purchases conservation easements on private land. LIP ranking criteria provide additional points for projects identified as Conservation Focus Areas - or as Highest Ranked Wildlife Habitat.

N.H. Department of Resources and Economic Development - NHDRED manages more land than any other state department.

- Division of Forests and Lands - “to protect and promote the values provided by trees and forests”
 - Forest Management Program – management of woodlands under state jurisdiction.
 - Forest Legacy Program – Administers federal program to permanently protect large tracts of forest lands
 - Forest Law Enforcement – major part of mission is to protect "forest cover adjacent to certain surface waters of the state and along public highways"

- Land Management Bureau – “works closely with the other Bureaus and with the Division of Parks and Recreation in the management of 212 State Parks and State Forests and 27 Conservation Easements totaling approximately 367,800 acres.” “[R]esponsible for acquisition of land for expansion of the state forest and state park system, and disposal of land superfluous to Department needs . . . The Bureau is actively engaged within the Department and across state government at setting policy regarding public use of state land.”
- NH Natural Heritage Bureau, which documents and tracks the state's rare species and exemplary natural communities.
- Division of Parks and Recreation
 - Land and Water Conservation Fund – “the single most important source of funding behind the creation of federal, state, and local park systems”

N.H. Department of Transportation

- Community Technical Assistance Program (in cooperation with DES, OEP, and the regional planning commissions) – providing planning assistance to municipalities to be affected by the widening of Interstate 93.
- Maintenance – e.g. mowing of vegetation in riparian areas

OTHER STATE-SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS

Land and Community Heritage Investment Program - an independent state authority that makes matching grants to N.H. communities and non-profits to conserve and preserve the state's most important natural, cultural and historic resources. The program has conserved over 250,000 acres to date.

Plymouth State University Center for the Environment

- Organizes annual New Hampshire Water Conference
- Engages local communities and organizations in environmental demonstration projects

University of New Hampshire

- Center for Freshwater Biology
- New Hampshire Estuaries Project (UNH)
 - *Management Plan* to be updated in 2010. Goal: Identifying and maintaining sustainable use of the water resources in the coastal watersheds.
 - Community Technical Assistance Program – provides assistance to communities with resource protection planning, especially water resources protection as part of land use planning.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program/EQIP) - Eligible projects for this voluntary cost sharing program include manure storage, composting, erosion control, nutrient management, buffers, filter strips, pasture management, etc.
- Agricultural Management Assistance - provides cost share assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations.
- Soil surveys – Soils in WMNF have not been surveyed. Soils surveys are needed to better understand the relationship between forest management practices and water quality.
- Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program – Funds permanent protection of important farm soils and land.
- Wetland Reserve Program – Funds permanent protection of important wetland areas.

White Mountain National Forest (USDA)

- Timber sales are managed by Districts and monitored by Supervisor's office with respect to BMPs. This includes limits on removal of basal area (15%) and other BMP requirements that are informed by research on relationship between forest management practices and water quality and hydrology, and more stringent than state's BMPs.
- Management of recreation (Districts and Supervisor's office)
- Cooperate with local watershed groups and provide expertise as requested
- Hubbard Brook and Bartlett Experimental Forests – conduct research on relationship between forest management practices and water quality and hydrology.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Regional Planning Commissions – provide planning assistance to municipalities

- Regional Environmental Planning Program (see DES Watershed Management Bureau on page 1)

N.H. Lakes – organizes annual Lakes Congress

Watershed Conference (DES, NH Rivers Council and NH Lakes)

Society for the Protection of NH Forests - Leads state-based and state-wide conservation organization, home of the Center for Land Conservation Assistance

National Conservation Groups with offices in NH: TPL, Nature Conservancy, Audubon